

What is a Healthy Relationship?

“Sometimes when my mind gets locked on something, I can get a little obsessive until I get it. And now you’ve got me wanting one. Great. At least now I know what to bring you instead of flowers on our first date.”

- John

Big Idea: To explore a variety of a beliefs and opinions people have about healthy relationships.

At the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- Understand components of a healthy relationship
- State what is important to each person in a relationship – values and opinions
- Articulate concrete ways to improve upon negative situations

Materials: Signs: numbered 1-4 hung around the classroom, Relationship Situations worksheet

Curriculum Connections

Health and Physical Education

C2.2 demonstrate an understanding of the skills and strategies needed to build healthy social relationships (*e.g., peer, school, family, work*) and intimate relationships

C3.3 describe skills and strategies (*e.g., communication, social, refusal, adaptive, and coping skills, conflict resolution strategies*) that can be used to prevent or respond to situations of verbal, physical, and social bullying and sexual harassment

English

1.2 identify and use several different active listening strategies when participating in a variety of classroom interactions

2.1 communicate orally for a variety of purposes, using language appropriate for the intended audience

Drama

A1.1 develop interpretations of issues from contemporary sources as the basis for drama

A2.2 use a variety of conventions to create a distinct voice that reflects a particular global, social, or personal perspective

Minds On

Ask your students: What does a healthy relationship look like? What does an unhealthy relationship look like?

Review the ABC’s of a Healthy Relationship.

Action

Hang four signs (numbered 1-4) in each corner of the room. In a moment you will read out different relationship situations, where students will have to make a decision based on four choices. Once they have made a decision, they will move to the corner of the room that reflects their choice. Remind students that there is no right or wrong answer. This activity is meant to explore student’s values, beliefs and opinions about relationships. You may want to discuss why they made the choice they did.

Connect/Consolidate/Discuss

Collect the class as a whole group to revisit each situation and discuss.

Relationship Situations

I really like this person in my class. We added each other on Snapchat and they keep asking me to send them nude photos. When I playfully decline, they says that if I really liked them, I would do it. Should I do it?

Choices

1. Send them, everyone else is doing it.
2. Decline
3. Ask if he would rather meet in person.
4. Delete him off Snapchat

My best friend started dating this person, who I'm not such a fan of. They're quite rude to him, constantly puts him down in front of our friends, and frequently yells at him. I've tried to talk to him, but he just shuts me down saying he loves them. What do I do?

Choices

1. Stay out of it, it's none of your business.
2. Go straight to the person and confront them.
3. Suggest that your friend breaks up with her.
4. Be supportive and keep an eye on it.

My parents are constantly checking my phone and my Instagram. I've asked them to stop, but they say I shouldn't mind if I have nothing to hide. Can't I have a little bit of privacy?

1. Create fake accounts to distract your parents .
2. Try to talk to your parents about respecting your need for privacy. Parents should be willing to give the same privacy they want for themselves.
3. Go completely awol so that they can't get ahold of you.
4. Go through their phone and find things to use against them

I really like hanging out with this person and our time together. I like when we make out and watch movies, but then there's always this pressure to go further. Every time I hesitate, they say we're gonna do it anyways, we should just get it over with. I don't know how many times I can say no before it becomes a problem. What do I do?

Choices

1. End it. They're making you feel uncomfortable.

2. It will happen eventually and you know you want to, so do it.
3. Discuss with this person your desire to take things slow.
4. Just keep saying no, that's your right.

My sister used to be a social butterfly until she started dating someone. Now it's almost as if they own her. They decide who she can see, what she wears and when she can go out. Is this normal? One day I saw bruises on her leg and she said she bumped into a door. What do I do?

Choices

1. Tell your parents.
2. Talk to your sister directly.
3. Get her friends involved.
4. Get your friends involved to threaten him.

My girlfriend is getting to be overbearing. She's so jealous and constantly accusing me of cheating on her, even though I never have. Whenever she doesn't know where I am, she blows up my phone. She says it's only because she worries about me. I'm sick of her stalking me. What do I do?

Choices

1. Break up with her.
2. Talk to her about needing space and personal time.
3. Get one of her friends to talk to her about her stalker behaviours.
4. Start treating her the same way.

My friend started dating this guy, who's known as a real player. He's always talking to other girls in the hallways. Yesterday, I saw his profile on a dating app. I don't know if I should tell my friend since she really likes him.

Choices

1. Don't tell, it's not your business.
2. Definitely tell her, she needs to know he's playing around.
3. Talk to the person directly and confront him.
4. Try and hint to your friend without being direct about it.

I tell my best everything, but lately the things I've been confiding in them start getting around. I don't feel safe telling them anything that happens to me because they start telling other people. I really value our friendship, but I'm starting to lose trust in them? What do I do?

Choices

1. Start telling her secrets to everyone. What goes around, comes around.

2. End your friendship, you can't trust her.
3. Discuss the importance of trust and respect within your friendship.
4. Continue the friendship but stop sharing personal information with her.

My boyfriend has been consumed with his studies and after school jobs. He barely pays any attention to me, so I cheated on him. I just wanted to feel wanted again. He's never found out and I regretted it immediately after it happened. If he doesn't know, I don't have to tell him right?

Choices

1. Don't tell him, as long as you don't do it again.
2. You are obviously unhappy in the relationship, break up.
3. Tell him, honesty is the best policy.
4. Maybe he doesn't want to know, he could be cheating too.

ABC's of a Healthy Relationship

- **A** is for Awareness
- **B** is for Balance
- **C** is for Conscious Choices

A is for Awareness

Using what you know to respect others and demanding respect in return. Knowledge of the consequences of unhealthy relationships, recognizing danger signs, and knowing your boundaries. Preventing violence by recognizing a lack of power and respect. Applying the knowledge you have in order to change unhealthy relationships into healthy ones. Basically, awareness means knowledge of all aspects of a relationship. This knowledge can be gained through talking with trusted teachers, counselors, family, and older friends. The Internet and books can also help you find the information you need.

B is for Balance

Balance means being in sync with your partner and having a relationship that is not one-sided – meaning that one person has more control or power than the other. Communication is the key to staying in balance. Both you and your partner have to talk about what the other person wants, and listen to what the other person has to say. You need to realize that your partner will have his or her own valuable opinions, and that you have to work together to balance their desires (and vice versa).

You and your friends probably have similar interests, but you are not completely the same. Likewise, you may have common interests with family or your boyfriend/girlfriend, but that doesn't make you the same person. You can certainly do things together, but remember that you can have different interests, too.

Make sure you and your partner have time to pursue your own interests as well. If you change in a relationship and adopt all of the other person's favorite things, hobbies, and lifestyles, the relationship becomes unbalanced, which is a very bad sign.

C is for Conscious Choices

Conscious choices include being able to decide what the next step in the relationship is – don't allow things to "just happen." Allowing things to escalate on their own is a common excuse that teens use to explain getting into emotional or sexual situations that they don't always know how to handle. Choices mean being able to take control.

In order to be aware, balanced, and make healthy choices, you need the building blocks of the ABCs: communication, trust, and respect. They are the keys to a healthy relationship.